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UNCLAS ANKARA 006293

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [TU](#) [IT](#) [YM](#) [KMPI](#) [KDEM](#)

SUBJECT: BMENAI: DEMOCRACY ASSISTANCE DIALOGUE PLANNING  
CONTINUES APACE FOR NOVEMBER 25 MEETING

REF: A. ANKARA 5081

[1](#)B. STATE 237054

[1](#)1. This is an action request. See paragraph 3.

[1](#)2. Summary: Democracy Assistance Dialogue (DAD) co-sponsors Italy, Turkey and Yemen continue planning for a November 25 meeting in Rome of the three FMs, and possibly the U.S., at which they will release a DAD work plan. After the Rome meeting, the co-sponsors envision a series of issue-focused, NGO-centered meetings. DAD financing is still not resolved. BMENAI is not understood in Turkey, and the MFA is reaching out to members of Parliament and others to explain it. End Summary.

DAD Planning Continues Apace for November 25 Meeting  
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[1](#)3. Turkish MFA Planning Department Head Tezel told us on November 4 that Democracy Assistance Dialogue (DAD) co-sponsors Italy, Turkey and Yemen continue their planning apace. FMs from the three co-sponsors will meet in Rome November 25 (changed from the November 26 date in ref A). Tezel thought that the Italians might invite the U.S. to Rome in its capacity as G-8 President, but was uncertain about whether the Italian hosts have reached a final decision on the matter. Action request: We request the Department inform us whether Italy has invited us to the November 25 meeting, and if so, our response.

[1](#)4. Using section 1.5 of the G-8 Plan of Support for BMENAI as their "mandate," the co-sponsors are drafting a declaration to be released at the end of the Rome meeting laying out DAD's objectives and a work plan. (Note: This is five days after the November 20 date mentioned in ref B for governments to present the Government of Morocco with reports on initiatives in which they are involved. We will point this date to the Turks. End Note.) Tezel expects easy consensus on the text. One of the co-sponsors will present the declaration at the December 11 Forum for the Future meeting in Rabat. Tezel said FM Gul plans to attend the Rabat meeting.

[1](#)5. After the Forum for the Future meeting, Tezel said the DAD co-sponsors envision a series of issue-focused meetings, perhaps preceded by a larger meeting officially launching DAD. While the Rome meeting will not include NGOs, Tezel said Turkey hopes for NGO "ownership" of DAD thereafter; he views DAD as an NGO-centered initiative.

[1](#)6. DAD financing questions are not yet resolved. Tezel noted that the Yemenis raised the financing issue in New York in September, DAD co-sponsors are exploring the possibility of some G-8 financing; Tezel speculated that some funding could come from NGOs' existing funding. The co-sponsors realize they will bear some financial burden, including events hosted in their countries.

BMENAI Not Understood in Turkey  
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[1](#)7. Tezel agrees that BMENAI is not understood in Turkey. There is a widespread misperception here that it is a U.S. plan to control Middle East oil and to convert Turkey from a secular state into a "moderate Islamic" state that would then serve as a "model" for other countries.

[1](#)8. We attended an academic conference in late October that included a session on the "Turkey's Role in the Broader Middle East." Both university professors who spoke vaguely addressed regional geopolitics -- and completely failed to focus on regional reform (one did not even mention the word reform). Neither mentioned DAD or Turkey's role in DAD, apparently because they did not know about it. Neither mentioned any BMENAI-related meeting or text. Tezel also attended and agreed that it was a poor performance.

[1](#)9. Tezel told us the MFA is reaching out to members of Parliament and others to explain BMENAI. The MFA is also pushing to insert BMENAI-related talking points into PM Erdogan's and FM Gul's public statements.  
EDELMAN